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Sheldon Jackson School,
Sitka, Alaska.
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Dear Friends:-

You may be interested to have the first impressions of a new teacher upon her arrival at the Sheldon Jackson School.

I landed at the Sitka wharf bright and early one morning a few months ago, curious and eager to catch the first glimpse of my new home. I was greeted by some of the mission teachers who had come to the wharf to meet the new arrivals for the school. The first thing that impresses one as she walks up from the wharf is the location of the town. It is beautifully situated, nestling along the bay with large, stately mountains standing as great sentinels in the rear. The town stretches along the harbor for a distance of about a mile, the mission being located at one end. It is almost impossible to describe to you the beautiful location of the school. The buildings are all so arranged as to afford an excellent view of the beautiful bay, dotted with small islands which appear to be piles of rocks, completely covered with pine trees and ferns. An interesting feature of this view is the fact that it is never the same but each day lends a new charm. Perhaps this part may sound rather unimportant, but let me say that it is important because environment is everything, and especially with young people at the impressionable age as these students are.

The buildings are larger, better equipped, and more artistic than I had ever let myself hope they could be. They far surpass in comfort and beauty any building I saw anywhere on my trip through Alaska. We can almost imagine we are living in a large city, excepting we are spared the continual buzz and hum of electric cars and automobiles. In place of these noises we hear the tide dashing up on the shore and against the beautiful mission boulder which is located almost directly in front of the grounds. One cannot help but marvel at God's greatness in such a wild, rugged and fascinating place! The whole scenery is a continual inspiration, and those who have been here for years never tire of it but continually see new things to enjoy.

I found six new buildings, the first one in line being the small girls' home, which has two large dormitories and a play-room for the accommodation of the girls, and a parlor for the domestic art classes. The girls have a matron who loves and cares for them as carefully as a mother. Next to this is the large girls' building. The two dining rooms, one for the teachers and one for the children are located at either end of the hall and are very pleasant and attractive. It was a very interesting sight to see the boys at the first tap of the bell, line up and march over to the dining room, keeping time with the drum. They file in and take their places at one side of the room, while the girls take their

places on the opposite side. How they do enjoy this time and what fun they have laughing and joking over their meals! One part of this building is fitted up with rooms, each accommodating two girls, and at the other end of the hall is a large dormitory. The building next to this is the recitation hall, the first floor being given over entirely to a large gymnasium, splendidly equipped. The money was certainly well spent for this part of the work, because nothing in the whole institution affords more wholesome pleasure for these children. On the second floor are three large school rooms and a well equipped domestic science kitchen. The girls are very much interested in their sewing and cooking lessons. They feel that these two departments are the most important part of their work, and perhaps they are right.

The next two buildings are very similar to the girls' hall except for the dining rooms and the domestic art room. The large boys live in one and the small boys in the other building, and these are very live places I can assure you. The laundry and boiler room are in the sixth building. They are well fitted out except for electric irons which we hope to have before long. All the buildings have electric lights, steam heat, hot and cold water on every floor. The rooms are all very artistically and comfortably furnished.

A word about the children. I was surprised to see so many bright and intelligent faces, girls with their hair neatly arranged and decorated with large ribbon bows (red being the favorite color) and boys who took pride in looking neat and nice. I felt very conscious at first of the fact that they were sizing me up in a very scrutinizing manner. I find them rather slow to make friends, and only within the last week have I seen any signs of confidence in me. One cannot help but love them because they are as a rule very sweet dispositioned and anxious to do the right thing, tho' many times they try our patience when we really do not understand them.

I feel very enthusiastic and confident for the future of the school. With these fine buildings, ample teaching force, children anxious to learn, friends interested and helping, why should we not grow and increase in influence and power among these natives in Alaska? May God help us all to be true to our trust.

Very sincerely yours,

EDNA FINDLEY.